

Finding Aid for the ECC

Sierra Hess; Katie Blocksidge, Advisor
The Ohio State University

INTRODUCTION

Education Curriculum Centers (ECCs) are resources in teacher training programs that are necessary for students during field practicum and earlier coursework. These centers include books and services that would normally be found in children’s libraries, but also science kits (ex: skeleton models), math manipulatives (ex: dice or pattern blocks), and professional books (ex: pedagogy). The ECC at the Ohio State University at Newark faces difficulties that many others do not because of its location in Hopewell Hall across campus from the library in the John L. and Christine Warner Library and Student Center and its mission to serve not only education majors but all students and community members who could benefit from the materials. Many other ECCs serve only students in the education program, and their materials are included in their main library’s catalog, making it easier to advertise and find items. But because of the separation at the Newark campus, many students aren’t aware of this resource because of the smaller staff that can’t keep up with social media pages. The purpose of this study was to research current trends in other ECCs and to tailor these findings to fit this ECC’s needs by creating a *u.osu.edu* website that makes it easy to visually advertise materials in collections as well as make finding like items quicker, easier, and ultimately more student-led.



[Photos provided by Ohio State]

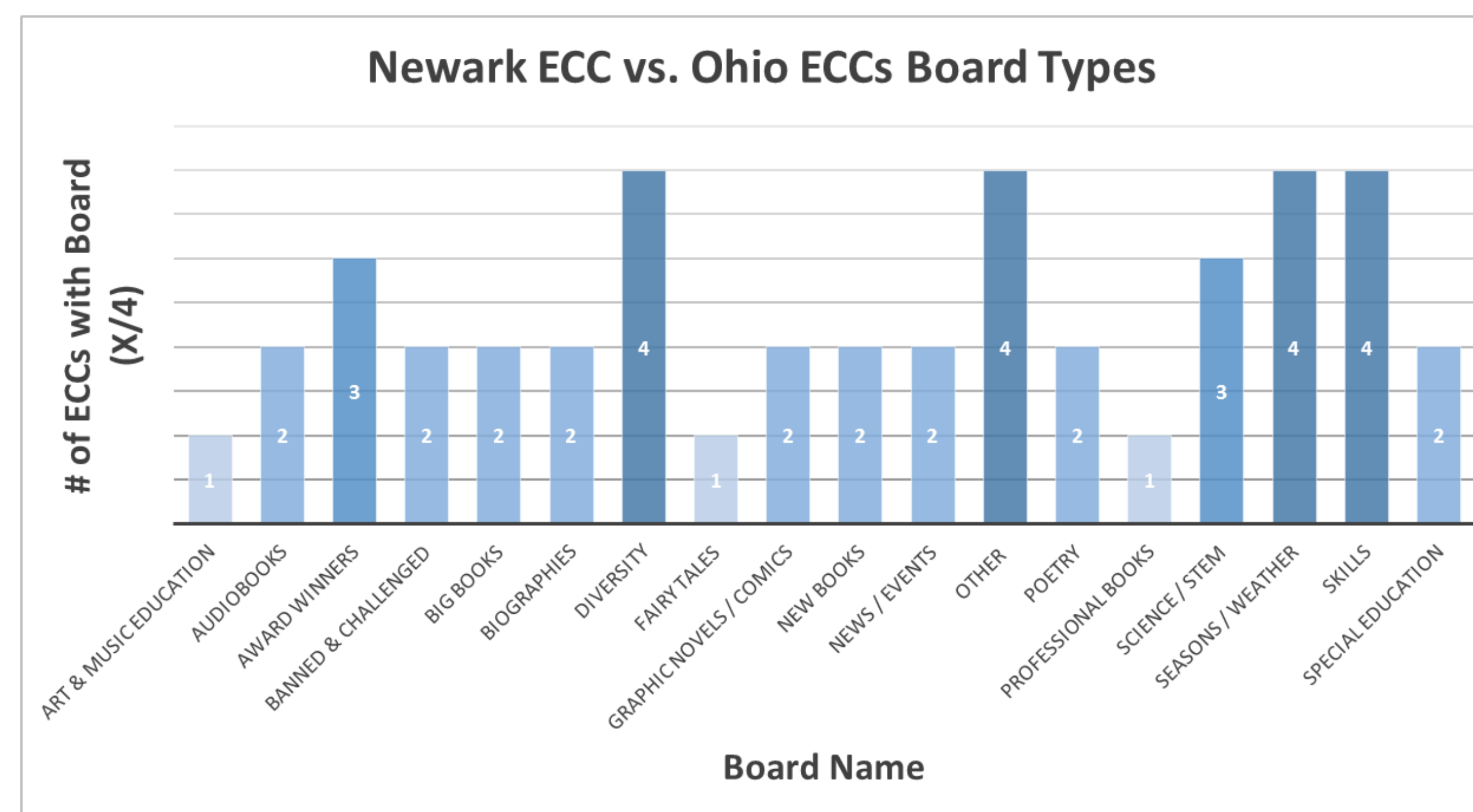


METHODOLOGY

In order to conduct research on current trends in other ECCs, I travelled to two of the most active ECCs in Ohio—the University of Dayton and Wright State University—and emailed three of the others—Ashland University, Bowling Green State University, and Cedarville University—for information about how they advertise their catalog items through finding aids or online websites. I also searched Ohio State’s library databases for finding aids and libraries on Pinterest. Finally, I interviewed Desiree Fuerst, the ECC’s Coordinator, as well as Deidra Herring, Ohio State’s Education Subject Librarian, for information on how Ohio State could grow in terms of their education libraries. As a way of trying to see how this research would fit into the ECC at Newark, I began to analyze the ECC’s current catalog, which was only a year old at the time and in its beginning stages.

RESULTS

While I was conducting my interviews with the other ECCs, I was told about finding aids being created on Pinterest. After searching these pages, which four of the five schools had, I generated a list of commonly used boards (represented visually in the bar graph below). By analyzing the Pinterest pages and a Wikipedia page that Wright State was using as a finding aid for their non-print materials, I realized that titles, subtitles, and anchors are very important for website design clarity because they make it easier to organize and jump down a page. Linking to outside sources, such as a catalog or the American Library Association (ALA) website was also important. Finally, being visual was extremely important as well. Marcia Butler and Cassandra Kvenild even assert in “Enhancing Catalog Records with Photographs for a Curriculum Materials Center” that “not supplying images as metadata for items that most need them (i.e., kits, games, and models) is to make them nearly irretrievable” (136) because users won’t know what is in a kit, for example.



[This graph shows how many times the boards that I used on the ECC’s new website are also used in four other Ohio ECCs.]

Through my database research, I found that thousands of libraries across the world are active on Pinterest with boards on diversity and culture, seasons and weather, award winning books, professional books, and new books. Pinterest proved to be the best resource of all social media not only because news of events can be shared, but it also has the ability to visually group materials in a board, link to outside sources, such as catalogs, and inspire community participation. Alison Gregory suggests in “Some Pinterest-ing Ideas For Academic Libraries” that ECCs should “have boards such as ‘What we’re reading’ and ‘new fiction’” (13) in order to promote community engagement and reach out to users right at home.

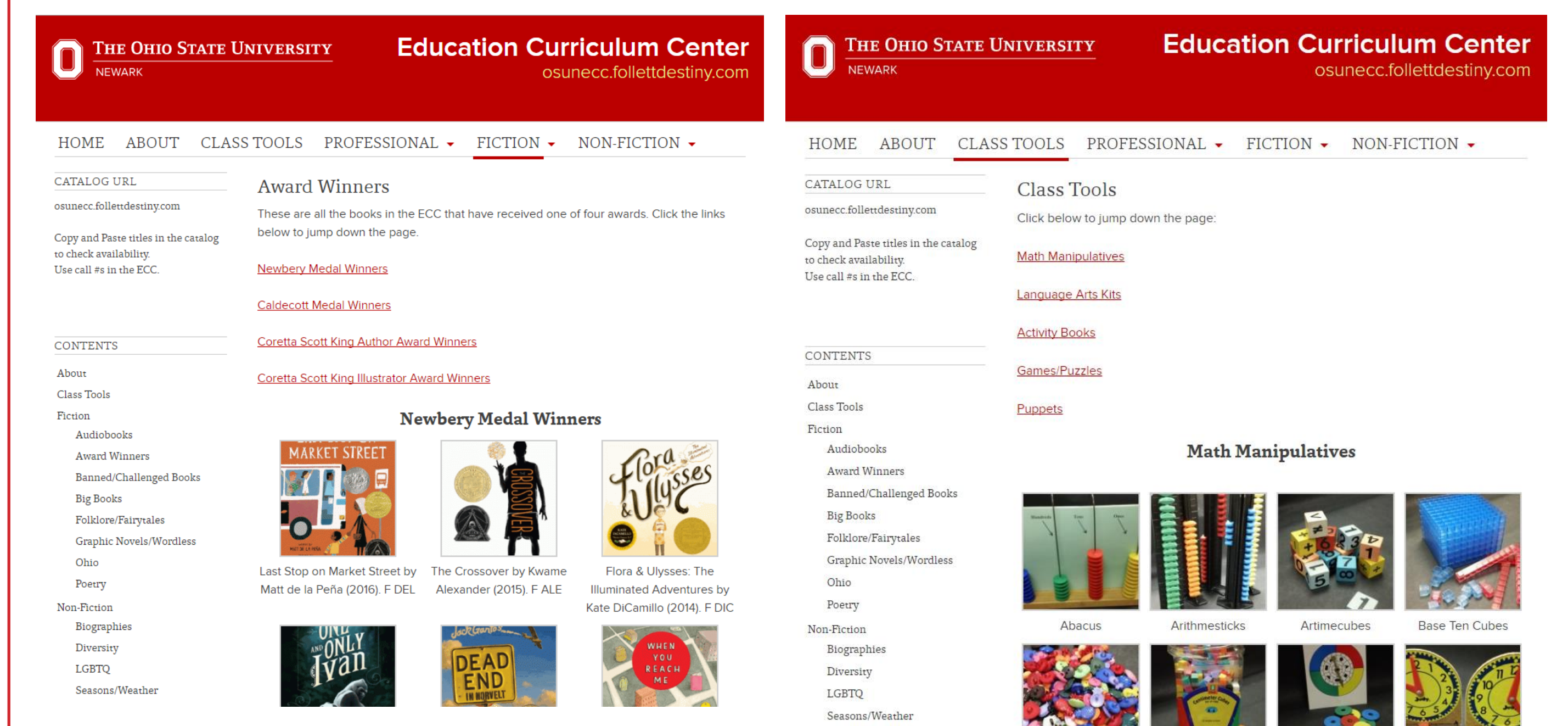
With all the social media platforms out there, it can be hard for libraries to keep up. Elaine Thorton, in an article titled “Is Your Academic Library Pinning? Academic Libraries and Pinterest,” suggests specific tips for libraries to be active on social media such as to “Plan profile content before beginning... Plan the boards...Link your profile to your website and other social networks...familiarize yourself with the rules of copyright...Keep it interesting...Link suggested circulating library resources such as books, DVDs, and music CDs to your library catalog” (173).

An interview with Deidra Herring, Ohio State’s Education Subject Librarian, helped give insight into the need that Ohio State has for an education library. While Columbus is limited to the Edgar Dale Media Center and the Technology Enhanced Room, the Newark campus has an ECC that can now be used more by every Ohio State student.

CONCLUSIONS

I created a website that makes it simple to advertise the collection and for students and community members to discover like materials—kits, audiobooks, professional books, award winning books, new books, etc.—which lends ideas to students about how to organize a lesson plan.

- Galleries visually show book covers in a collection, like Pinterest
- Links to ALA website and catalog (Call Numbers in caption text)
- Blog gives new books / books related to holidays / themed weeks / units in class
- Services are advertised with prices



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REFERENCES

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